

DAILY LIFE AND CUSTOMS

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ready, he goes outside the lodge and shouts the invitation, 105
calling out each guest's name three times, saying that he is 512
invited to eat, and concludes by announcing that a certain 574
number of pipes — generally three — will be smoked. The
guests having assembled, each one is served with a dish of
food. Be the quantity large or small, it is all that he will
get. If he does not eat it all, he may carry home what
remains. The host does not eat with his guests. He cuts [276]
up some tobacco, and carefully mixes it with *Pherbe*, and
when all have finished eating, he fills and lights a pipe, which
is smoked and passed from one to another, beginning with
the first man on his left. When the last person on the left
of the host has smoked, the pipe is passed back around the
circle to the one on the right of the door, and smoked to the
left again. The guests do not all talk at once. When a [576]
person begins to speak, he expects every one to listen, and
is never interrupted. During the day the topics for conver- [521]
sation are about the hunting, war, stories of strange adventures,
besides a good deal of good-natured joking and chaffing. When the third and last pipeful of tobacco has
been smoked, the host ostentatiously knocks out the ashes
and says "*Kyi*," whereupon all the guests rise and file out.
Seldom a day passed but each lodge-owner in camp gave
from one to three feasts. In fact almost all a man did, when [517]
in camp, was to go from one of these gatherings to another.

A favorite pastime in the day was gambling with a small 105
wheel called *it-se'-wah*. This wheel was about four inches 512
in diameter, and had five spokes, on which were strung 525 ●
different-colored beads, made of bone or horn. A level, [237]
smooth piece of ground was selected, at each end of which
was placed a log. At each end of the course were two men,
who gambled against each other. A crowd always sur-
rounded them, betting on the sides. The wheel was rolled
along the course, and each man at the end whence it started,
darted an arrow at it. The cast was made just before the

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wheel reached the log at the opposite end of the track, and points were counted according as the arrow passed between the spokes, or when the wheel, stopped by the log, was in contact with the arrow, the position and nearness of the different beads to the arrow representing a certain number of points. The player who first scored ten points won. It was a very difficult game, and one had to be very skilful to win.

Another popular game was what with more southern tribes is called "hands"; it is like "Button, button, who's got the button?" Two small, oblong bones were used, one of which had a black ring around it. Those who participated in this game, numbering from two to a dozen, were divided into two equal parties, ranged on either side of the lodge. Wagers were made, each person betting with the one directly opposite him. Then a man took the bones, and, by skilfully moving his hands and changing the objects from one to the other, sought to make it impossible for the person opposite him to decide which hand held the marked one. Ten points were the game, counted by sticks, and the side [533] which first got the number took the stakes. A song always accompanied this game, a weird, unearthly air,—if it can be so called,—but when heard at a little distance, very pleasant and soothing. At first a scarcely audible murmur, like the gentle sighing of an evening breeze, it gradually increased in volume and reached a very high pitch, sank quickly to a low bass sound, rose and fell, and gradually died away, to be again repeated. The person concealing the bones swayed his body, arms, and hands in time to the air, and went through all manner of graceful and intricate movements for the purpose of confusing the guesser. The stakes were sometimes very high, two or three horses or more, and men have been known to lose everything they possessed, even to their clothing.

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The children, at least the boys, played about and did as

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423 were open equally to all according to one's energy and ability. Tribes, bands, and even families might have their favorite and usual area within which to hunt, but these ties to a territory were unrelated to ideas of ownership of land, game or plants. Once labor had been expended, however—an animal killed, a horse stolen, 425 a plant gathered, a stick or stone picked up, or a dream dreamed—the product was imbued with value and became personal property.

422 It is possible to separate food from other types of property because it was not owned by individuals in the same way as were other goods. Food "belonged" to the collector but was put in charge of the women of the collector's own or adopted family upon return to camp. Food then belonged to the family, yet 224 even this title was clouded by a series of social obligations. A hunter was obliged 571 to share with anyone who had helped him in the kill, with the man whose horse he had borrowed, or with the man from whom he had obtained hunting power. He was expected to provide some part of the meat for the sick or disabled, and he also might have had obligations to some of his in-laws. The family used what remained. [261] In times of famine these rules were set aside and food became band property to be shared by all. Food had additional uses, both ceremonial and social—feasts were 574 an important part of many rituals, to be described later, and as part of the everyday social life of the men, as noted above.

422 Horses and other goods were individually owned by men, women or children. Personal dreams, experiences, exploits, and the symbols of these were also 422 personal property and all could be transferred—sold, exchanged, given, or loaned, 424 in whole or in part—by one person to another. These other goods appear to have been free of forced sharing in times of scarcity. The rule appears to have been that 785 none should starve, but other needs of the poor had to be met by appeals to the generosity of those who had more. The unfortunate were cared for but usually given worn or castoff clothing, tepee covers, tools, robes, and so on, rarely things of much value.

437 Goods other than food were used by their owners or were used as exchange goods. Exchange might be for economic reasons, as when a man gave a horse to a medicine man for a cure, or to get a charm to insure success in horse stealing, war, or other endeavor. Goods might be given in exchange for the supernatural power of another. One kind of property could be used to purchase another, for example, 782 furs and guns for horses, or horses for tepee covers. Another type of transfer was for ritual reasons, as when goods were offered to the sun in the Sun Dance, to 764 ghosts or other spirit forces in propitiation, petition, or thanksgiving. Here too could be classified the practice of placing some of the property of a deceased with his body in order that he might have the use of such things in the next world.

● 525 A third use, more difficult to classify, would be the exchange of property in gambling. The Blackfeet were avid gamblers and some on occasion were known to have gambled away all their possessions.

421 The fourth use of property was its transfer, by gift or exchange, in order 576 to gain increased prestige and status. Among the Blackfeet property was accumulated and wealth created, to be used for the demonstration of generosity. A man secured horses and other goods in order to give them away. He loaned a horse to another hunter, in part to share in the meat, in part to create an obligation for

80 • SOCIAL INTERACTION

527 Conference at Many Glaciers Lodge in Glacier National Park. Six of the governors
591 who visited the encampment were honored by adoption and given names, and
the Governor of Virginia was selected to respond for the others. He began by
remarking that the people of Virginia felt a special and warm regard for the In-
dians. "If it had not been for the help of the Indians the Jamestown settlement
would not have survived that first winter." A Blackfeet standing beside me gave
me a dig in the ribs with his elbow and said, "that's the day we lost the war."

527 The encampment also provides the opportunity for other forms of social
expression. Medicine bundles are opened with attendant prayers, dances, and face-
[188] painting. Men may be "captured" to become members of the Dog society, an honor
[515] that must be paid for in goods or cash. People visit from tepee to tepee, drink
[514] coffee, eat, and talk. Sometimes one or more of the elderly Indian-oriented leaders
will provide a lunch of boiled beef, bread, salad, doughnuts, cookies, cake, and
coffee to all who wish to come.

524 By midafternoon a stick game or two gets under way near one of the con-
cession booths behind the tent area and usually continues until dawn. Sometimes
known as the "hand game," this is a popular and widely known Indian gambling
game. All that is required is space, two poles, planks, or timbers placed about three
feet apart parallel to each other, two "bones," or short wooden cylinders about
1/2 inch in diameter and two inches long, one banded and the other plain, and some
plain sticks about ten to twelve inches long, usually ten to a side to use as
markers. Two teams line up facing each other behind each pole. One person starts
the game by intently shuffling, showing, and after many flourishes hiding the
bones, one in each hand. His team chants and drums with sticks on the pole in
front of them to give him support and to confuse the opposition during the hiding.
Finally he extends his hands so that one of the players on the other side can choose
by one of several signs which hand holds the unmarked bone. If the "guesser" fails
to choose correctly, his side forfeits one of their marker sticks and the "hider"
tries again; if he guesses correctly, the bones and roles change sides. The game is
over when one side wins all of the marker sticks. Bets between individuals, both
[525] participants and onlookers, are placed before the game begins and other bets are
made frequently on the results of individual guesses. There are many variations in
the procedure that I have not mastered. A bettor gets a lot of action for his money
whether he fully understands what is happening or not. The drumming, chanting,
joking, as well as the strain of waiting for the outcome of a game in which large
sums of money are at stake, contribute to an exciting time.

527 People spend the rest of the time during the encampment doing the neces-
[517] sary chores of camp living and enjoying the pastimes appropriate to sex and age—
the children play games, older people work on costumes, play blackjack, visit,
loaf, or go into town.

527 In spite of this being a community enterprise with fairly large crowds
1717 that are attracted to it, the people in relatively continuous attendance are the Indian-
oriented. The people who camp on the grounds and participate in the festivities
include and appear to be like the men I interviewed and classed as Indian-
oriented. In retrospect, I would sort the onlookers into four categories: (a) Indian-
oriented spectators from many parts of the reservation who spend much time on

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[525] 237 ners for a boy's sled. Pieces of ribbon were fashioned into gambling dice. Wedge-shaped pieces of the porous hipbone or shoulder blade made useful paint brushes. A buffalo skull was placed on the altar in the tribal sun dance. Some women dehaired rawhide rope by pulling the rope back and forth through the eye sockets of a buffalo skull.

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[379] Many buffalo cows killed in early spring contained the almost fully developed embryos of calves. Indian women cut off the heads of these unborn calves and used the entire body skin for berry, pemmican, and tobacco sacks. Finally, dried buffalo dung provided a practical substitute for firewood when Indians were camped on the open plains at a distance from firewood.

224 Most of these articles were by-products of the buffalo chase. Blackfoot Indians hunted buffalo for food and hides. The great number of animals killed provided ample supplies of the materials required to make the many other items listed above. Although buffalo were hunted throughout the year, the Indians recognized seasonal differences in the quality of the meat and the utility of the hides. Throughout most of the year the meat of bulls was tough and unpalatable compared with that of cows. So the Blackfeet preferred to kill cows for food except during the early summer months when bulls were prime. They recognized the approach of the bull-hunting season when they saw the yellow flowers of "tooth grass." During the warm summer months, when buffalo hair was short, skins were taken for tipi covers and the numerous other articles made from soft-dressed skins or rawhide. Cows were at their best in the fall. This was the period of intensive hunting to secure winter meat supplies. It was only during the cold months, from November through February, that buffalo hair was long. That was the season for killing buffalo to obtain robes for the American traders and for Indian use in making bedding and winter clothing. Calves, generally born in May, were hunted soon thereafter.

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224 Although their pedestrian ancestors surrounded buffalo on the open plains in the warmer months, Blackfoot horsemen rarely employed the mounted surround. They preferred the chase, a

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524 A measure of the fun-loving nature of the Blackfeet may be
judged from the great number and variety of their games and
524 amusements for young and old. Children's play varied with their
ages, with the sexes, and with the seasons. It had real educational
857 value. In their play children imitated many of the activities of
their elders and so painlessly prepared themselves for the re-
524 sponsibilities of adult life. At play girls learned the rudiments
857 of baby care, craftwork, housekeeping, and moving camp. Boys'
868 competitive sports were rowdy enough to toughen their bodies
and varied enough to develop their agility and skill in the use
of weapons. This play helped to improve their bodily co-ordina-
tion and gave them valuable practice in making quick, sure de-
cisions in the midst of action—excellent training for the future
524 hunter and warrior. Adults found relaxation from the cares and
tensions of daily life in games of skill or chance and in spectator
[525] sports. The common custom of gambling on the outcome intensi-
fied their interest in these activities.

Older children made their own playthings and gaming equip-
ment. Little children's toys were made for them by their elders.
A little girl of six or seven years who accompanied her grand-
mother into the brush to collect firewood might beg the old
woman to make her a birch doll. The grandmother would cut a
section of a birch limb about one foot long and four inches in
diameter with her axe. She used her butcher knife to cut a
groove around the piece about four inches from one end. This
formed the doll's shoulder line. Above this line she whittled a
crude, knob-like head and bored little holes in one side of the
knob to suggest eyes, nose, and mouth. The simple doll had no
ears, hair, or legs. The body retained the unaltered form of the
birch cylinder below the shoulder line. Little girls clothed these
dolls by simply wrapping a piece of buckskin or trade cloth
around the cylinder.

As girls grew older, they wanted more realistic dolls. Then
their mothers or grandmothers made them dolls with arms and
legs as well as heads of skin or trade cloth stuffed with grass.
The facial features were delineated with thread or trade beads.

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526 Boys bet arrows on another throwing contest called "humpies."

● 525 The missile was a section of willow branch with a piece of the trunk or larger branch attached to it. The boy who could throw this piece of wood the greatest distance was the winner.

526 Archery contests were popular and consumed much of the boys' playtime. One contest, usually held in spring, consisted of shooting at an arrow placed upright in the ground below the crest of a hill from a distance of about fifty yards. The boy whose arrow was closest to the target won the arrows of his rivals. Another archery competition, known as "walking arrow shooting," was begun by one boy shooting an arrow and all the others using it as a target. They did not return to their starting place, but, instead, a second target arrow was shot from the site of the first target and the contestants shot again. Again arrows were bet on each shot, with the understanding that the winner took all.

[525] The winner of a stationary target contest took the arrows he had won and shot them at a moving target. This was a packet of buckbrush about five inches long tied with rawhide cord. He threw the target into the air, raised his bow, and shot before the buckbrush dropped to the ground. Each arrow that failed to hit the target was returned to its original owner.

The period of the summer encampment, when all the boys of the tribe were together, was a specially active time for them. About sunset two groups of boys sat down opposite one another. A large flat stone was placed on the ground in front of each group. The boys spat on the stone, placed a hot coal from a fire on top of it, then hit the coal a solid whack with a stone maul. This made a report like the crack of a gun. It was important to keep the big rock moist with saliva, because a dry rock would not make as loud a report as a wet one. The only object of this contest was to see which group of boys could make the loudest noise. This was simply called the "fire game."

Wrestling also was popular in the summer encampment. Sometimes all the boys living in tipis on the south side of the camp circle challenged the boys living on the north side of the circle. The leader of one group called upon a certain lad from the other

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526 until one side succeeded in hitting the ball between the goal posts defended by their opponents. It was a fast, rough game. Sometimes the teams struggled for hours, hitting the ball all over the field before a goal was scored. Boys sometimes took advantage of this game to do a bit of playful flirting with the girl contestants. Food was prepared before the game. At game's end it was served to members of the winning team.

Another teen-agers' ball game played by both sexes together or by girls only was known as the "Cree Women's game." The players stood in a circle about twenty feet in diameter. One of them threw a hair-stuffed ball, a little larger than the one used in the shinny game, toward a player on the opposite side of the circle, who hit it back with his or her fists. The object was to keep the ball in the air. As soon as it fell to the ground all the players scrambled for it, trying to pick it up and put it back in play as quickly as possible. This primitive volleyball game demanded both speed and agility of those who played it well.

524 Mature women preferred less strenuous and more sedentary games. The "travois game" was their favorite. It was played by two women, seated opposite each other, with five flat pieces of buffalo bone, each about six inches long and three-fourths of an inch wide and tapering to blunt ends. Four of these bones were marked on one side with meandering, incised lines, called "snakes." The fifth bone bore incised bands near each end. To start the game one woman cast the four snake-marked bones from a hollow shank-bone shaker on the ground or a blanket. If all four bones landed snake-side up, she was declared the winner. However, that rarely happened. If one or more of the bones remained plain-side up, the player was allowed eight attempts to turn them all snake-side up by casting the fifth bone at them spear fashion. Then a count was kept of the upturned snake-marked bones and the opponent took her turn. When one of the players gained a point total agreed upon in advance, she won the game.

525 When two expert players matched their skill and luck in the "travois game," they usually were surrounded by men and

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women who bet robes, parfleches, travois, weapons, horses, and other valuables on their favorite.⁶

Another popular women's gambling game was seen among the Piegiens more than 150 years ago by David Thompson. Small pieces of wood, each marked to represent different counts, were placed in a wooden bowl, thrown into the air, and caught in the bowl. Then the marks on the upturned surfaces of the rude dice were counted. The bowl passed from contestant to contestant until one of them gained the number of points they had decided would be required to win the game.⁷

A variant of our children's guessing game of "button, button, who's got the button" has been a very popular gambling game among the Blackfeet for more than a century and a half. The Blackfeet called it "fancy gambling." In its most simple form this game was played with two short cylindrical lengths of bone small enough to be completely hidden in a man's clenched fist. One bone was unmarked, the other had a narrow band of rawhide wrapped around its center. The contestants sat facing each other, with a lodgepole on the ground between them. A member of one side was chosen to hide the bones. While his teammates sang and beat upon the lodgepole with short clubs, he swayed with the music and moved his hands back and forth in front of or behind his body, passing the bones from hand to hand to confuse the opposition further. One of his opponents had to guess which hand held the marked bone. If he guessed wrong, the first side scored a point and continued to hide the bones. If he guessed correctly, his side scored a point and gained the right to hide the bones. Twelve willow sticks served as counters, and the game continued until one side won them all.

In the old days this was one of a series of games played between men's societies during the summer tribal encampment.

⁶ Wissler, "Social Life of the Blackfoot Indians, AMNH Anth. Papers, Vol. VII, 60-81. Describes a more complex variant of "the travois game."

⁷ Thompson observed this game before 1800, and Bradley mentioned it in the 1870's, but Wissler's informants did not describe it to him in the first decade of the present century (Thompson, *Narrative*, 359-60; Bradley, "Manuscript," *MHSC*, Vol. IX, 277).

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524 Both contestants and onlookers bet on the outcome. The stakes were horses, robes, guns, and even the clothing on their backs.

525 Some heavy betters lost everything they owned.⁸

561 The men's societies also competed in the wheel game. One society challenged another by sending tobacco to its leader. If he accepted the tobacco, his society accepted the challenge also. If he feared the skill of the rival society at this game, he might return the tobacco to the challengers. They then presented the tobacco as a gift to the sun.

526 The playing field was a level stretch of ground about thirty feet long, with a log placed across the course at each end. Before the game began, members of each society gathered around one of the logs and sang their ritual songs. Each society carefully selected as its representative one of its members who possessed an outstanding war record and who was adept at this game.

526 The wheel used as a moving target in this game was a small hoop, about three inches in diameter, made from the fire-hardened neck cord of a buffalo. Inside the hoop were five or more spokes of rawhide cord and a small opening in the center. The spokes were strung with beads, a different color being used for each spoke, and each color representing a different kind or color of horse (red for sorrel, copper for bay, yellow for buckskin, white, and black). Each contestant carried an arrow-like pole about three feet long with a metal head and feathering.

[525] Spectators lined the sides of the course, many of them betting on the outcome of the contest. They were silent as the two players stepped on the course. Each of these contestants raised his pole toward the sun and offered a short prayer in such words as, "See me. See this arrow. See how it is painted. That is how my arrow was painted when I killed a Crow. I shall shoot to win because what I say is true." Each man then declared his target on the wheel in terms of his own war experience. One might call out, "I took a white horse from the Flatheads. I shall

[178] ⁸ Thompson, *Narrative*, 360-61. A century and a half later this is still a popular gambling game among the Blackfoot Indians. It is now commonly referred to as "the stick game."

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shoot for the white beads." The other might say, "I took a sorrel horse from the Crows. I shoot for the red beads." If a player lied in proclaiming his coup, he would surely lose. 526

The players agreed between themselves which of them was to roll the hoop. If they couldn't agree, the one with the better war record was given his choice. Some men preferred to roll the wheel so they could know its course and speed. Others preferred to let their opponent roll the hoop so they could concentrate upon casting their pole. Before rolling, each man spat upon the head of his pole. The roller then lifted the wheel to the sun and rolled it toward the log at the far end of the course. Both men ran after it and hurled their weapons before the hoop struck the log. If one man pierced the center of the hoop with his pole, he won. If neither pole hit the center, that man won whose pole was in contact with the colored beads of his choice when the wheel stopped after rebounding from the log barrier. The game continued until one player either pierced the center hole of the wheel or scored his point. Usually it was not necessary to roll the wheel more than twice. Judges representing each society were stationed at both ends of the course to determine the winner.

Some young men played this hoop-and-pole game informally as a means of gambling. In these contests there were no recountings of war exploits or prayers to the sun before rolling the wheel. The players merely declared their targets. [525] •

Boys played this game with a larger wheel for a target. It was a sarvis-berry-wood hoop with a rawhide webbing inside and a small hole in the center which the boys called "the belly button." The blunt-ended poles were as long as the players could reach with outstretched arms. Boys pretended they were lancing buffalo when they threw their poles. They called it the "bull game." Certainly hurling poles at a moving target was good training for the future hunter and warrior.

The Blackfoot Indians look upon the hoop-and-pole game as a very old one. They claim that Napi once played it against a Kutenai on Oldman River. The stakes were control of the buffalo. 526 773

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two to four miles in length. On the day of the race the competing horses were watched very carefully lest a horse medicine man approach one of them and employ his secret formula to cause it to tire or falter in the stretch. The finish line was marked on the day of the race. It might be merely a furrow scraped in the earth across the course or two piles of rocks erected about sixty feet apart by society members who had used rock fortifications to defend themselves against an enemy attack. 541

Shortly before race time the two competing horses were led to the finish line where the crowd of spectators gathered to look them over and to place their bets. Horses were commonly wagered, the animals bet against each other being tied together and held by a youth. Guns, robes, blankets, and food were other common stakes. A man might wager his pad saddle against another's bow and quiver of arrows. Even painted lodges, together with all their sacred accessories, sometimes were bet on horse races. Men did not wager their wives' possessions. The women bet among themselves. Before race time great piles of articles wagered stood near the finish line. 541 525

While the jockeys walked their horses toward the starting point, members of the competing societies drummed, sang their ceremonial songs, and engaged in good-natured horse play. They pretended to re-enact their war exploits against members of their rival society. A man who had scalped an enemy would run up to a member of the rival group, knock him down, and pretend to take his scalp. A man who had captured a horse of the same color as the one entered by the rival society in the race might cry out, "I stole a horse just like that one of yours. I had complete power over it. This horse of yours will be tamed too." 541

Two men, one from each society, served as starters. The jockeys walked their horses in a wide circle around them. As they came abreast of them, facing the finish, the starters shouted "Ok't" [now], and the jockeys whipped their horses into a run. The race was on.

At the finish line there were also two judges, one man from each society. But usually there was nothing to judge, for the

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1797 from Christian missionaries. In 1890 the census estimated that "5 per cent of these Indians are Roman Catholics and the others are sun worshipers."¹⁹ Not until three years later was a permanent Protestant mission established on the reservation. Then Rev. and Mrs. Dutcher built a Methodist church on Willow Creek near the boarding school.

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657 Meanwhile, some of the agents charged with the difficult task of reporting the Indians' progress toward civilization were not satisfied with the results they could obtain by example and persuasion alone. They offered bribes or threatened punishments in their efforts to destroy the symbols of the Indians' savage life which were distasteful to them. Disregarding the time-honored American principle of freedom of religion, they directed their attack primarily against the Indians' tribal ceremonial, the sun dance. In 1887 Agent Baldwin ordered members of the Indian Police not to participate in or to encourage this ceremony. He exacted a pledge of each Indian who received a brood mare from the government that he would take no part in the sun dance. Consequently, there was no sun dance the following summer.²⁰

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[362] Major Baldwin also pointed with pride to the fact that he had required all members of the Indian Police to cut their hair and to "abstain from the objectionable habit of painting their faces."²¹ Friends of the Indians prevailed upon Washington officials to remove this hostile agent.

[1797] Yet, six years later, Captain Lorenzo Cook, another strict disciplinarian, ordered two sun dance lodges used in previous years to be torn down and the timbers used for erecting branding corals. He prohibited not only the sun dance but "Indian mourning, beating the tom-tom, gambling, and wearing Indian costumes" as well. And he tried to discourage "less pernicious practices such as horse racing." Captain Cook even asked the traders not to stock the paints Indians used for painting their faces.²² Short

19 Report of Indians Taxed and Not Taxed, U. S. Bureau of Census, 360.

20 Reports of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1898, 151-52.

21 Mark D. Baldwin to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, August 1, 1886, Indian Office Records.

22 Reports of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1894, 159.

171 feast. Even allowing for the voracious appetites of the Arikara there must have been much more meat wasted than eaten.

Boller (1868, p. 229) observed of the relatively poor Hidatsa-Mandan, "When there is plenty of meat, the large bones and coarse pieces are always thrown aside, but in times of scarcity there is absolutely nothing left but the head."

This feast or famine economy quite likely existed among the Plains Indians before the introduction of horses. Nevertheless, their employment of horses, by making buffalo much easier to kill, encouraged greater squandering of buffalo resources, hastened the extermination of the buffalo, and thus contributed to the disintegration of their traditional culture based upon buffalo hunting.

HUNTING OF OTHER MAMMALS ON HORSEBACK

237 The hides of deer, elk, and antelope were very useful to the Black-
291 foot in the manufacture of summer and dress clothing. These animals
136 were formerly numerous in the Blackfoot country. Although David
224 Thompson (1916, p. 359) wrote of Piegan "bets between individuals
[525] upon hunting in running down animals, and the Red and Jumping
[171] Deer" from horseback in the period ca. 1800, both the more recent
literature and the testimony of my informants claim that these animals
were hunted by footmen. Denig (1830, pp. 535-537) said it was the
general practice of all the Upper Missouri tribes to hunt deer, elk, and
224 antelope on foot.² My Blackfoot informants said that not only was
492 there no communal hunting of deer, elk, or antelope by mounted men,
Weasel Tail said few Blackfoot-owned horses were swift enough to
chase them. Lazy Boy referred to a colt, born from a mare stolen from
the Shoshoni, that was able to catch up with an antelope herd as a
rare and unusually speedy horse.

224 Nevertheless the literature indicates that deer and antelope hunting
492 by mounted Indians of the southern Plains and Plateau was not un-
171 common.³ Their skill and ability in this activity may be considered
proof of the greater speed of their horses as well as their superiority
as horsemen over the Blackfoot and other Upper Missouri tribes.

² However, Raynolds (1868, p. 62) witnessed two Crow Indians chase an elk on horseback and bring it down, in the fall of 1859.

³ The Nez Percé preferred to hunt deer from horseback "wherever the ground would permit," in Lewis and Clark's time (Coe, 1893, vol. 2, p. 1012). Telt (1930, p. 103) credited Coeur d'Alene horsemen with running down antelope on open ground, although "this kind of hunting was not always successful." In 1846, Tixier (1940, p. 169) witnessed an Ojaga deer hunt by relays of mounted men. Twelve years later Marcy (1857, p. 158) saw two young Comanche women ride after antelope, and rope them. Knack Smoky told me the Kiowa formerly hunted deer, elk, and antelope from horseback.



FIGURE 32.—Construction and use of a child's hobbyhorse, Blackfoot.

Lazy Boy said that by the time Blackfoot boys were 10 or more years of age they abandoned play with toy horses for the more serious and responsible activity of tending their families' horse herds. Girls also had little time for such play after they were called upon to help their mothers with household chores. 883

At the Heart Butte Sun Dance encampment on the Blackfeet Reservation, Mont., in the summer of 1944, I watched three small boys, aged about 10 years, playing at bull dozing and calf roping in imitation of these modern rodeo events. In the game of calf roping one boy played the part of the calf, another the horse, and the third the rider. The horse carried the rider after the "calf." When the rider roped the "calf" he jumped off and bound the "calf's" hands and feet together with a small rope (pl. 12, ~~88~~ ⁸⁵⁷). In the game of bull dozing the rider attempted to grab the "steer" around the neck and shoulders and wrestle him to the ground. Such play is of recent origin, of course. However, in spirit it is akin to the "horse play" of Blackfoot children in buffalo days.

HORSE RACING

David Thompson wrote of the Piegan ca. 1800, "They have also sometimes horse racing, but not in the regular manner; but bets between individuals in running down animals, as the Red and Jumping Deer, or the killing of so many Cow Bisons at a single race" (Thompson, 1916, p. 359). It is possible Thompson had not been in Blackfoot encampments in late summer, the traditional horse racing 541
A [See category 857, p. 358-K--Analyst] [525] ●

575 the hill out of sight of the crowd at the start and finish mark. The
541 distance to be run always was measured by eye. The most frequently
mentioned straightway distance was "about as far as you could barely
see a horse on the open plain." Some courses were longer. Races were
recalled in which the horses at the starting point could be seen from
the finish only through a spy glass. Generally the distance was from
2 to 4 miles, very rarely shorter. Informants' statements thus tallied
closely with Bradley's reckoning (in the 1870's) that Blackfoot horse
races generally were run over a course of "three or four miles" (Brad-
ley, 1923, p. 276).

There was a strict rule requiring each horse entered by a society to
be the property of a member of that society. Usually each society
had held trials some time prior to the race in which the fastest horses
were run to determine the intersociety race entrant for that year.
These trials were held in secret at some distance from the encamp-
ment. On the day of the race the two horses entered were watched
carefully by members of the respective societies who were warned to
[189] keep other people away from the competing horses. The greatest
precaution was taken to prevent a horse medicine man from coming
near the race horses for fear that he might use his secret power to
make one of the horses tire or falter in the stretch. (See p. 272,
on the powers of Blackfoot horse medicine men.)

541 Informants did not agree on the method of selection of the jockeys.
Some said a jockey was selected by the owner of the race horse.
Others claimed the society as a body chose the jockey. However, it
is clear that jockeys usually were relatives of the horse owners. They
were light, thin, adolescent boys or young men who knew how to handle
[291] horses in races. Jockeys usually wore only breechclouts and tied their
[302] hair behind their heads to keep it from blowing in their faces. Gen-
[492] erally they rode bareback with only a war bridle (a two-reined raw-
hide rope looped once about the horse's lower jaw) and a whip to
control the horse.

The finish line of the race was sometimes just a furrow scraped in
the earth across the course. At other times it was marked by two
piles of rocks, each about 3 feet high, erected some 60 feet apart. Each
pile was set up by members of one of the competing societies. They
were men who had used rock fortifications in the defense against the
enemy.

541 Shortly before the race the two competing horses were brought to
525 the finish line where the crowd gathered to view them and place bets
on their favorites. Betting usually was heavy, by nonmembers as
well as members of the rival societies. Horses were commonly
wagered, the horses bet against each other were tied together and held
by some lad. Guns, robes, blankets, and food were common stakes.
A man might wager his pad saddle against another's bow, arrows, and

quiver. Even painted lodges, together with all their sacred paraphernalia, were bet on the outcome of races. However, the winner of a painted lodge was required to submit to the ceremony of transfer before he could gain possession of that lodge. Even though he won the lodge, he was expected to give the former owner a horse at the time of formal transfer. On the other hand, if it was discovered that the loser of a painted lodge attempted to hold back any sacred article belonging to that lodge, the winner might rub his face in manure and the loser would have no cause for anger. Before race time great piles of articles wagered stood near the finish. A man might risk any or all of his material possessions. Although Wilson (1887, p. 192) claimed the Blackfoot wagered their wives on horse races, both Bradley (1923, p. 276) and my informants denied this was ever done. My informants claimed a man did not bet any of his wife's personal property. Women, of course, bet among themselves.

As the jockeys walked their horses toward the starting point (assuming the race was to be run on a straightaway) members of the competing societies drummed, sang their society songs, and engaged in good-natured horse play, pretending to reenact their coups against members of the rival society. A man who had taken a scalp in war would run up to a member of the rival society, knock him down, and pretend to scalp him. If a man had stolen a horse of the same color and appearance as one entered in the race by the rival society he might cry out, "I stole a horse like that one of yours; I had complete power over it. This horse of yours will be tamed too."

Two leading men, one selected by each society, served as starters. As the jockeys neared the starting point on their way down the course, they walked their horses in a wide circle, side by side, around the starters. As they came abreast of the latter, facing the finish, the starters gave the verbal signal "Ok'i" (now), and the jockeys whipped their horses into a run. Lazy Boy said races sometimes were started by a shot from a gun instead of a verbal signal. The starter, in that case, must have been a man who had shot an enemy in warfare. If the starter lied in his claim to that distinction, it was believed one of the horses in that race would fall.

In order to let the spectators, gathered around the finish, know how the race was progressing, two horsemen, one on a dark- and one on a light-colored horse, each representing one of the competing societies, were stationed at one side of the course about midway of its length. As the racers came abreast of them the horseman representing the society whose horse was in the lead at that point would weave his horse back and forth.

There were two judges at the finish, one representing each society. Usually, however, there was nothing to judge, for the winning horse was a hundred yards or more in the lead. Not infrequently one horse

HORSE RACES BETWEEN BLACKFOOT TRIBES

Lazy Boy described a race between horses owned by a Piegan and a Blood Indian which was run in his youth: 541 628

A Blood Indian who owned a fast race horse named Almost Baldy wanted to challenge Burnt-a-Tree-Down, a Piegan owner of a fast racer, Little Buckskin. The Blood rode up to Burnt-a-Tree-Down's lodge and fired at the lodgepoles above the crossing. Burnt-a-Tree-Down told Big Snake, the camp announcer, to tell the Blood Indian he would race next day. The following morning Big Snake announced the race to the whole camp, which at that time included both Piegan and visiting Bloods. Two men were assigned to arrange the bets. As they were made, the announcer called them out. All bets were between individuals. Horses, guns, robes, and other articles were wagered. Then the contestants agreed upon the course and distance. They raced beside a big lake. About the center of the length of the course were stationed a Blood and a Piegan horseman on a hill. Each had a gun. As the riders passed them the Blood fired his gun as a signal to the watchers that the Blood horse, Almost Baldy, was in the lead. As soon as the gun was fired the Piegan jockey, who had been holding his horse in check, let Little Buckskin go. There were one Blood and one Piegan judge at the finish. But there was nothing to judge. Little Buckskin was far ahead. We Piegans took everything from the Bloods. We were sure happy after that race.

This description indicates that in the intertribal horse races involving only Blackfoot tribes the procedure was like that of the inter-society races, previously described, and with which members of all Blackfoot tribes were familiar.

OTHER INTERTRIBAL HORSE RACES IN WHICH BLACKFOOT PARTICIPATED

Horse races pitting the best Blackfoot-owned horse against the best racer of a neighboring non-Blackfoot tribe were not common in buffalo days, due primarily to the traditional hostility of the Blackfoot toward their neighbors. No detailed descriptions of these races were obtained from informants. Lazy Boy mentioned a race between a horse owned by visiting Nez Percé and the best Piegan racer in which the latter was beaten handily. He thought the Nez Percé horse was the swiftest one he had ever seen. 541 648

The two contemporary descriptions of intertribal races in which the Blackfoot participated are brief. Hamilton (1900, pp. 66-68) witnessed a race between Crow and Piegan in 1858. Betting was heavy in ponies and robes. The course was about a half mile in length. Horses were held at the head by men on the ground until the starting signal was given. Jockeys were boys "stripped naked." Little Dog, the Piegan Chief and a Crow chief were the judges. The Piegan won the race and the Crow "departed soon after the race, sullen and silent. All the young Piegans had a great time dancing and singing that night until a late hour." [525] [291]

541 Schultz (1907, pp. 134-136) described a match race between a
 648 Piegan-owned horse and one belonging to a Kutenai in the summer
 525 ca. 1878. The betting was excessive, horses bet against each other
 291 being held by some nonbetting boy. The course was a level stretch of
 about 500 yards. The youthful jockeys, naked except for the breech-
 clout, raced from a standing start across a finish line marked by a
 furrow scraped across the dusty course. The horses finished in a dead
 heat and precipitated a fight, both Piegan and Kutenai claiming they
 had won.

These two cases suggest that intertribal horse races were not con-
 ductive to friendly relations between the tribes involved. In most
 respects the race procedure appears to have been similar to that of
 the intratribal Blackfoot races. However, the standing start was not
 typical of the latter races, and the distances run appear to have been
 shorter than was usual in intratribal races.

LATER HISTORY OF BLACKFOOT HORSE RACING

541 The popular intersociety horse races ended with the breakdown of
 575 the Blackfoot men's societies in the 1870's. Curtis (1911, vol. 6, pp.
 178 20-29) reported that with the exception of the Raven Bearers and
 525 the Brave (or Crazy) Dogs all Piegan societies became ceremonially
 inactive before 1880. In 1894, Captain Cooke, Acting Agent, Black-
 feet Reservation, Mont., reported that he had prohibited gambling
 among the Indians in his charge and had discouraged "other pernicious
 practices, such as horse racing" (U. S. Comm. Ind. Affairs, 1894, p.
 541 159). However, this did not put a stop to Blackfoot horse racing.
 Informants remembered a number of exciting match races in the early
 years of this century, and McClintock witnessed horse races in the
 Sun Dance encampment of the Piegan prior to 1910 (McClintock, 1910,
 p. 278).

In recent years horse races have appeared on the program of the
 Blackfeet Rodeo at Browning each July. In the summer of 1941,
 during my residence at Browning, a new oval track was built at the
 rodeo grounds immediately west of the Museum property. Horse races
 were held each day of the rodeo. So popular were these races that
 in succeeding years race meets were held on the same grounds on
 Memorial Day and again on Labor Day, as well as during the July
 rodeo period. The spring and fall races were attended primarily by
 Indians, who showed marked enthusiasm for them. However, the
 older men among my informants opined that the horses were not as
 fast as they used to be in their youth. Frank Red Crow had the same
 opinion of race horses on the Blood Reserve in recent years. "They
 are too big. Their legs are too heavy."

HORSES AS STAKES IN GAMBLING

Games and gambling were almost synonymous among the Blackfoot. Participants and/or spectators bet on the outcome of nearly all games of skill or chance. Small boys wagered their arrows and wooden tops in their games. As they grew older and acquired more valuable possessions they bet more heavily. In describing the gambling of Piegan men ca. 1800, David Thompson (1916, p. 361) wrote: "The stakes are Bison Robes, clothing, their tents, horses, and Arms, until they have nothing to cover them but some old robe fit for saddle cloths. They have some things they never gamble, as all that belongs to their wives and children, and in this the tent is frequently included; and always the Kettle, as it cooks the meat of the children, and the Axe as it cuts wood to warm them. The dogs and horses of the women are also exempt."

In my informants' youth horses were common stakes in gambling on horse races, foot races, the hoop and pole game, and the stick or hand game. Some young men were both luckless and inveterate gamblers, who lost all their horses and were forced to return again and again to enemy camps to recoup their losses. Their love of gambling kept them poor and at the same time kept them active as horse raiders.⁶⁴

⁶⁴ Boller (1808, p. 100) mentioned Hidatsa-Mandan betting of horses on hoop and pole games ca. 1860. He added "I have frequently seen Indians play until they had lost everything." Denig (1880, pp. 567-568) wrote that gambling of horses was common among all the Upper Missouri tribes, saying "There are some who invariably lose and are poor all their lives." Even the Flathead, whose numerous "Christian virtues" were recognized by fur traders, missionaries, and Government officials, loved to gamble and employed horses as common stakes (Ewers, 1948 a, pp. 18-19). Certainly gambling was one of the common media by which horses changed hands among the horse-using tribes of the West.

175 buffalo horse, was the greatest asset of the race horse, for the course,
541 as a rule, was a lengthy one. No other horse was as highly prized by
the Blackfoot as was the winning racer.

231 Indirectly the horse influenced other forms of Blackfoot recreation.
I have described (pp. 236-238) the introduction of horse symbolism
231 into the intersociety hoop and pole game. The common employment
182 of valuable horses as stakes in gambling must have encouraged interest
[526] in other games of chance even though the games themselves may have
[525] been known to the Blackfoot in earlier times.

INFLUENCE ON SOCIAL LIFE

174 During the Pedestrian Culture Period, when men literally stood
565 on an equal footing, class distinctions must have been less marked than
556 in historic times. The cooperative hunt was an organization of near
182 equals in which the kill was equally divided among participating
families. Limited transportation facilities inhibited the accumula-
[554] tion of property and militated against social stratification based upon
wealth. Undoubtedly individuals who achieved outstanding war rec-
ords or possessed supernatural powers to call the buffalo (beaver
bundle owners), to cure the sick, or to perform acts of magic attained
positions of distinction and leadership which ranked them above the
average man.

175 After the introduction of horses permitted the accumulation of
231 property, social status came to depend less upon a man's physical
182 and mental qualities and more upon the number and quality of his
565 possessions. A class system began to develop in which there were
556 rich, middle-class, and poor families, distinguished primarily on the
basis of their relative wealth or poverty in horses.

The rich man owned not only the most horses but generally the best
ones as well. Wealth in horses permitted rich men to care for and
use their animals so as to increase their numbers and enhance their
value. Rich men owned the largest and best-furnished lodges, the
finest clothing, and the most sacred and valuable medicine bundles.
They also enjoyed certain privileges denied the other classes. They
had the widest choice of mates in marriage and could take the most
wives. They could even get away with murder by presenting horses
to relatives of the deceased man. On the other hand, the rich man
was expected to accept responsibilities which men of the other classes
did not shoulder. He was expected to assist the poor through gifts
of food and horses and loans of horses for buffalo hunting and moving
camp. He was expected to be generous in his hospitality and liberal
in his barter with others. Probably no one was more genuinely dis-
liked by the majority of the Blackfoot than the stingy man of wealth.

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Case No.	Indian Dance	Stick Game	Indian Societies	Indian Accent	Level of English	Church Attend.	Reading	West. Dance	Cards	Western Organizations	Visibility (A-High)
2	attend				good	reg.	A		occ.	X	C
3					good	rare	B		X		B
5	attend-	X-			good	occ.	C		occ.		C
6	attend-				good	occ.	A	X	occ.	X	D
7	attend-				exc.	occ.	A	X	rare		D
9	attend				fair	occ.	A				B+
10	X	X	X	X	fair	reg.	C	occ.	occ.		A
11	attend	X			good	occ.	C		occ.		B
13	attend-	X			fair	occ.	A	X	X	X	B-
14	X	X	X	X	fair	reg.	C		occ.		A
17					good	rare	B	occ.	occ.		B
18	attend-	X	X		good	occ.	C	?	occ.	X	A
19	X-				exc.	occ.	A	X		X	C+
21					good	occ.	A	X		X	D
25	attend-				good	reg.	A	X	occ.	X	B
26	X	X		X-	good	occ.	I		X-		B+
27	attend	X		X	fair	occ.-	D				A
28	attend-				good	occ.	A	occ.			B
29	attend-	X-			poor	rare	B				A
30					exc.	occ.	B		occ.		C-
31	attend-				good	occ.	A		occ.		C
32	attend	X-		X	fair	occ.-	B	occ.			A
34					good	reg.	A	X	occ.		C
35	X	X-	X		good	occ.	A	X	X	X	D
37	attend-			?	fair	occ.	C		occ.		A
38	attend-				good	reg.	B	X			B+
39	attend			X	fair	occ.-	C				A
42	attend-				good	occ.	B	X	X	X-	C
45	attend-				good	occ.	C		occ.		C-
46	attend-				fair	occ.	B		occ.	X-	C-
47	X	X	X	X	fair	reg.	D		X		A

[535]

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106 non-Indian. Some of the older men who remembered that their mothers
121 used some herbs, but did not know what these were and did not use them
177 themselves are credited with no knowledge.

184 Indian Dance is rated with an "X" for active participation in
[758] Indian social dancing, either as a dancer or a singer. "Attend."

[535] signifies frequent attendance at these affairs as an observer. Men
rated "Attend." have taken part in the past, and their attendance now
could be called vicarious participation. They know the roles and the
rules and are aware of all that is going on. "Attend-" marks the
occasional observer who enjoys watching the "Indians" perform their
"colorful" dances. The ratings rank individual interest in a social
activity that has continuity with Blackfeet culture.

● [525] Stick Game playing is rated "X" when the man does play
regularly, "X-" for occasional, and left blank when he does not play.
This complex and time-consuming gambling game is another activity
rooted in Indian culture. The gambling motive seems secondary to the
social satisfaction derived from participation, a judgement based upon
observation of hours of playing, singing, conversation, joking and
alternating moments of tension and hilarity that precede the resolution
of the game.

[575] Indian Societies records membership in named social organizations
that are presently active among the more Indian population on the
reservation. The nature and composition of extant Indian Societies was
not fully explored, but it appears that these are predominantly social
clubs, relatively unrelated to the old age-grade societies reported by
the earlier ethnologists. They are more akin to Wissler's third

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tourists, and occasionally carouse. The more conservative Indians eschew the Stampede. Forming a caravan of wagons "like old times," they proceed slowly to the Blood reserve. They pitch their tents on the gentle slope before Belly Butte to witness and rejoice in the Sun Dance of the Blood Indians. 484 [541] [296]

By the end of July most have returned to the reserve. Food boxes empty and money gone, they must again turn to earning a living. Clusters of tents where a man and his brothers have joined to mow the prairie grass and haul it to the stock farm for feeding the calves in the coming winter are pitched for two or three weeks across the highlands of the reserve. It is hard but not unpleasant work. Saturday is pay-day. Immediately a hand game starts in one of the tents; night and day the whole week-end the drum-throb resounds with brief intermission across the range. On Sundays a big crowd from all over the reserve convenes for horse-races on a great plain where the men bet down to their last quarter on the bay or sorrel. 221 [314] 517 [524] [541] [525]

In the meantime others are busy stacking the bundles of rye and oats behind the mowers, happy in their luck to have the crop cut before it was destroyed by a sudden hail-storm. By September when the children have returned to the schools, the wheat is ready to harvest. Farmers eagerly await the threshing machine, so their crops may be finished early. Others are charged with moving the main herd of cattle to the winter feeding ground, while a lowing mass of calves is prodded into the corrals for wintering. 221 [241] [233]

With farm work done, a tide of workers flows to the coal-mines. Some bring their families and move for the whole winter into the village of shacks that lies on the flat before the mine shaft. Others leave their families behind and don the miner's cap for a few weeks only. In full production scores of loads weigh in each week and are driven off to town. After work on Saturdays some people go to the movies in town, though many remain, crowding thirty or forty strong into one of the houses for a Deer Dance or a hand game. 221 316 464 517

By the time the first flurries of snow blow in from the west, the old people are settled in one of the clusters of log houses along the river. There, with rations, occasional money from the slaughter of a beef, and near to wood and water, they pass the winter with congenial friends who listen again to stories of a war party to the Crows. Certain younger man, hankering after a pool game in town, a bottle 221

THE ECONOMY

89

the seven whose incomes we inspected no change of property through this channel occurred. 585

A funeral brings with it certain distributive features. First, to prevent the bereaved from hurting themselves, many people must be present at all times in the days after the death. They must be generously fed, for generosity is important at all times. Then the grave-diggers are given something for their services. After interment all property is disposed of. The terms of the will are carried out, though they are concerned with only a part of the possessions given away. A house is literally cleaned of everything in any way valuable. People take what they wish, and the personal property of the deceased may be burned, especially at the death of a wife or husband. If a woman dies, the farm implements are kept for the widower by some close relative to prevent their being given away. If a man dies, his farm implements are either willed to a relative or, in case of no will, are given away to a kinsman. When everything is gone, the nearest relatives are expected to care for the bereaved and at the suitable interval of time give them new clothing, blankets, and food with which to start life over again. 431 765 574 767 465 768

Only one of the seven whose expenditures we investigated¹ was influenced by death; the deceased was his father's sister. Our informant took care of the old lady before her death, and others helped to buy groceries. No mention was made of property being received at death, and it is probable that she had little or none to dispose of. Only occasionally is death important as a means of distribution. 76

Outside the family an important system of distribution is gambling. This takes four main forms: hand game, pool or "snooky," poker, and horse racing. The hand games occur most frequently, particularly where many families congregate, as at the hay camps or the mine village. It is difficult to estimate how much changes hands through the course of an evening; we have heard of individuals winning \$30 in an all-night session. More often the gain or loss is \$2 to \$5. 525 524 541

Pool or "snooky," played by young men in the village pool hall, draws bets of 10 to 50 cents from the participants. Spectators may also enter the game via side bets, or novices may be lured into betting high stakes by a display of ineptness on the part of an expert who later will play in his true form to snare the sucker.

¹Cf. Appendix B.

^A [See category 434, pp. 191-194--Analyst]

525
524 Poker, another importation, consists simply in dealing and showing the cards. There are no changing of bets, raising, or wild cards, characteristic of the white game. It is a grim, silent gambling game with little social pleasure where in an hour with several dozen hands one may win or lose a week's wages.

541
525 Horse racing is seasonal, occurring only in late summer. As with most Indian betting, two groups make up equal pots, and only two horses race at one time. Those betting on the winner take all the money. Relatively little changes hands through this means because of the infrequency of horse racing.

525 In general the thing distributed in gambling is money. However, articles of clothing, watches, and knives are not infrequently seen in the pot.

574
431 Visiting constitutes another form of distribution, and there are two distinguishable kinds: visiting on the reserve and visiting off the reserve. Visits between neighbours whom one sees frequently usually involve no exchange. A visit from a seldom seen friend or relative requires a gift. Occasionally, the person who anticipates the making of a visit may bring a gift with him so that there may be an exchange. The articles exchanged in these circumstances are usually clothing, blankets, and small articles of furniture. On one visit of an unexpected sort an Indian and his grandson stopped at a house for fifteen minutes; they came out with a wagon for the grandson.

Visiting the Blood, Piegan, or even Crow reserves differs in that there should always be an exchange of gifts, but the host should give more than the visitor who, being away from home, cannot have so much with him. This rule, however, is modified by the relative wealth of visitor and visited. It is felt, especially when Blackfoot visit poor relatives, that the Blackfoot are on the average wealthier and should give very generously. Certainly considerable property changes hands despite the dearth of cash. People prepare themselves weeks ahead for a visit by saving meat or money for the purchase of blankets and clothing. While at another reserve, Blackfoot frequently "help out" with groceries. There is a mild competition in the long run between reciprocating visitors, and at departure gossipers check over the situation carefully.

As a result of this gift-giving and display of generosity particularly towards the favourite visiting spot, the Blood reserve,

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of the herds and consequently the returns from cattle have stood consistently lower. Only in terms of the number of horses do the Bloods exceed the Blackfoot, and it is likely that these are in quality more like the Blackfoot range horses than their sturdier work animals. We infer that the resources of the Blackfoot are no greater than those of the Blood but that the trust fund has enabled the Blackfoot to develop what they have. 433

In many kinds of property the Blackfoot also exceed the Bloods. Despite a larger population, the Bloods have only 95 houses on the reserve as compared with 186 on the Blackfoot reserve. In actual numbers, the Bloods own more tools, wagons, and implements than the Blackfoot, but on a per capita basis the Blackfoot exceed. Judging by personal observation, we would say that the Blackfoot houses have on the average more furniture and that their clothing is of a better quality than the Bloods. 511

In other respects the Blackfoot are at least the equal of other reserves. All Indian education comes through mission schools or day-schools, and though its adequacy may be questioned, it seems to be fairly uniform from reserve to reserve within a province. In health the Blackfoot are also as well off. The trust fund supports a first-class hospital, whereas medical care is available to most other reserves through missions. Drinking, gambling, and prostitution are at a minimum on the Blackfoot reserve, and we judge this to be true of other reserves as well because of the uniform policing system of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. 71
[87]
[743]
[273]
[525]
[548]

From the point of view of the administrator the needs of the Blackfoot reserve are satisfied equally well, if not better, than on most other reserves. They are one of the wealthiest groups of Indians in Canada, and little could be gained for them in Ottawa by appealing for more on the basis of these recognized needs. 511

Indian needs as expressed by the Blackfoot. What are the needs of the Indians as expressed by themselves, and how well are they satisfied by the economy? We may distinguish two types of Indians on the basis of needs: (a) Those whose needs concern mainly the satisfaction of the demands of food, good shelter, respectable clothing, and transportation; (b) those who, despite having these needs fairly well satisfied, still strive for things over and above these. Let us consider the two types, bearing in mind that they are arbitrary and for illustrative purposes only. 121

¹Cf. pp. 80-82.

541 pressed onto the stems. Horses so cursed were sure to slacken in the race.
824
777

Another method made use of a quirt (or a rod). The sau-gas-sin was placed in the mouth, and the rider sprayed the quirt with the juice. This quirt was not used to whip the horses. When the race began, the rider would try to get on the right side of the other horses; he carried the magic quirt but whipped his horse with a regular one. At an opportune time the rider threw back the sprayed quirt, causing the other horses to fall behind.

Sometimes a man used a small, flat stone that had been sprayed with the root. When no one was looking it was thrown at the competing horse. That horse would trip, probably break a leg, and die; and its owner would be sick for days.

524 For use in the hand game, the root was kept in the mouth. This would
525 make the other players lazy, and they would lose continually. But if a man
824 was suspected of using the power root, there was a defense against its
777

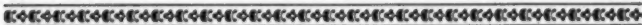
[825] influence. The loser went to his lodge (or to one nearby) and asked for a small piece of meat, which he combined with man-sage leaves. Carrying this charm in his pocket, he returned to the gambling place, where he walked abruptly among the participants and took the dice in his hands. Then he pretended to sing and perform with the dice—all the while secretly rubbing [827] them with the meat-and-sage mixture. After he handed back the dice the man who had been using the sau-gas-sin would get a headache and grow lazy, losing all he had won.

824 The power root was used by ceremonialists to bless others with long life
777 and good luck. Vows were made with sau-gas-sin, ceremony called for spitting
[782] on the hands and touching the head, shoulders, chest and hips: that insured
[695] the validity of whatever was said thereafter.

000 We have been told that the power root was once included in the rites of

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Making of a Warrior¹



000 IT WAS JUNE, 1881, and dull were the days at Joseph Kipp's lonely trading post at Carroll on the south bank of the Missouri. The Indians had all moved out upon the plain to summer hunt, and empty, monotonous were the hot, slowly passing days to us.

"This is no fun, sitting here day after day, doing nothing, Let me go camp with the Blackfeet for a time," I said to Kipp one day.

"Sure! Go! Have a good time," he answered.

I saddled my buffalo horse, tied on a roll of blankets, and, with Winchester rifle, plenty of cartridges, and some tobacco for presents, set off. Before evening I arrived in the camp of the Blackfeet in a well-timbered bottom of the Musselshell just below the mouth of Crooked Creek. A close friend of mine was Fox Eyes, son of Crazy Dog. They welcomed me, and at once the old man's wife, Badger Woman, and their pretty daughter, Little Bird Woman, prepared a soft buffalo couch for me and gave me to eat. In the evening the head chief of the tribe, Crow Foot, invited me to a feast-and-smoke in his lodge. It was late when I returned to Crazy Dog's lodge and took to my couch.

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[411] Wise, frugal, forceful Badger Woman was the head of that little family; Fox Eyes, with his muzzle-loading rifle, its provider; and Crazy Dog, its wasteful burden. An inveterate gambler, on that afternoon, in a hide-the-bone game with some of his cronies, he lost the skins of two beavers that he had caught and then tried to sneak

¹ First published in *The Youth's Companion* (December 8, 1910).

The Making of a Warrior

off with two of Fox Eyes' catch. But Badger Woman caught him in the act, snatched the hides from him, and scolded: "You nothing one! You always-losing gambler! Taking of our son's beaver trap-pings that I am saving until there will be enough of them to buy him a many-shots gun like the one *Apikuni*, here, has. You know how hard it is for him, with his old powder-and-ball gun to provide us with the meat and hides that we need. But still you would steal of his catches to gamble them off! Oh, you shameless, you hard-minded one!" And at that, without a word of reply, Crazy Dog returned to his cronies, lost all of the tobacco that he had, and then came to me begging for more. 525 593

"You know how it is," he whispered. "I am so crippled that I cannot hunt. So I gamble. My woman, of course, she scolds me, but I don't mind it. Her heart is good. Well, *Apikuni*, sneak to me some of your tobacco and I will again try to win—plenty win."

Said Fox Eyes to me on the following morning: "*Apikuni*, you know that I have never endured the sacred fast. I have never had time for it; my father crippled, unable to hunt, I have, ever since I grew up, been the sole provider for our lodge. But now the time has come when I must have my fast. So this I ask of you: be you our hunter, provider of meat, while I endure it." 785 787 [123]

"Yes, I will be your family's hunter; but why are you now so minded to fast sacredly?" I said.

"Because I want to be a real man, a warrior, a member of the Doves, or the Raven Carriers, or some other band of the All Friends warriors society. I have already decided upon my fasting place: a cliff facing Big River and close above the mouth of this South Bear River." [183] [575]

Badger Woman and Little Bird Woman, listening to our talk, became excited and pleased. Said the mother: "Oh, Fox Eyes! Oh, my son! I am so glad that, at last, you are to do this. Too long have you been a lonely, friendless one, unable to join a war party, unable to take part in the dances and the happy feast gatherings of any of the All Friends bands. But now all that is to end. Oh, how proud I shall be of you, someday seeing you returning with a war party, waving enemy scalps, singing the victory song, riding and driving before you enemy horses." 785 787 156 [575]

524 by thirty in length was cleared of obstructions and rendered as smooth as possible. A ring of bone, stone or metal about two and one-half inches in diameter was provided, across which were stretched two beaded strings, crossing in the center of the ring at right angles. Two players participated in the game, each of whom was provided with a small stick about six feet long, one end of which terminated in a small hook. Standing side by side at one end of the prepared place, one of the players tossed the ring so as to roll it along the ground in their front, when both started after it together, throwing their sticks in advance of the ring with the object of catching it upon the hook. The players then resume their stations and throw the ring and follow it as before. A stick of wood is placed across the farther end of the course to stop the ring in the event of both players failing to catch it upon his hook. The writer has been unable to learn with certainty the manner of counting the game, but it appears to have been determined by the particular division of the ring (made by the crossed strings) in which the hook was caught. Large amounts were often staked upon the game and the players would become so interested as frequently to continue it the entire day. A very similar game was described by Catlin as prevalent among the Mandans, but it differed in several particulars.

541 The men also played the game of ball already described and in summer horse racing was a favorite amusement, [525] the course being usually three or four miles. As in civilized society extensive betting accompanied every race and there was nothing the Blackfoot gambler was not ready to stake except his liberty and his wife.

524 Another favorite gambling game was that of Open and 525 Shut. It was played by any number of persons, divided [533] into two sides, who sat facing each other on the ground, and, while all sang a particular song, some member of one side passed some small article back and forth in his hands endeavoring to conceal in which hand it finally rested. If guessed correctly his side paid a forfeit, otherwise it received one from the other side.

524 The women had certain games peculiar to themselves. The principal one was played with six pieces of flat bone, six or seven inches long, shaved thin and sharpened at the needs and marked on both sides with peculiar lines, each side different from the rest. Two squaws played the game seated on the ground facing each other. The pieces of bone were all gathered in the hand and thrown edgewise on the ground, when the marks were counted on the sides that fell upward, the throw alternating between the players according to the count. They played another game called "The Bowl and Counters." The bowl was of wood, six or seven inches in diameter, and contained five flat seeds differently marked, which were tossed up and caught as they fell, the exposed sides being counted as in the case of the sticks. The women were almost as much addicted to gambling as the men and only their limited leisure and inadequate means prevented them from rivaling quite the sterner sex.

• [525] The Blackfeet had no games that could be considered merely social, and the men and women rarely played their games in common. This happened occasionally, however, more frequently in the game of ball. It should be added [17] that the squaws frequently played ball alone. When playing cards were introduced they rapidly superseded all their former games except billiards and ball.

MUSIC

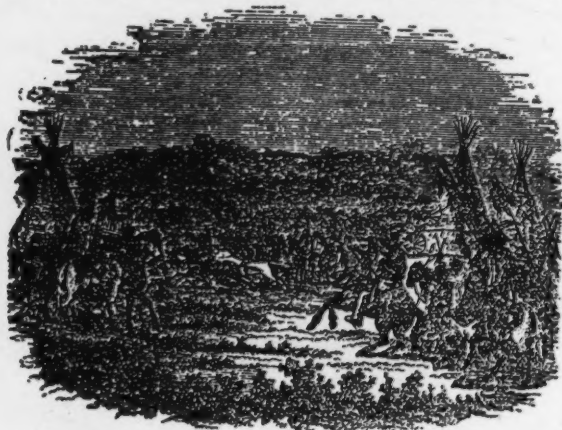
534 The Blackfeet had but two instruments of music, the drum and the flageolet. The former has already been described. The drum was used only as an accompaniment to the dance or in the incantations of the medicine men. The flageolet bore a crude resemblance to the civilized instrument, upon which some of the young men played a few simple melodies, always in the evening and usually by way of serenade. These instruments were very rare. The [533] Blackfeet possessed quite a variety of songs, but all designed to accompany their dances or games. (See Songs).

AMONG THE INDIANS OF NORTH AMERICA 295

journeys, and pitching their tents on towards Edmon-
ton, leaving few behind capable of bearing arms. They
were in pursuit of the Crees and Assiniboinés, whom
they threatened totally to annihilate, boasting that they
themselves were as numerous as the grass on the plains.
They were the best mounted, the best looking, the most

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[648]

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No. 16—Horse Race.

warlike in appearance, and the best accoutred of any
tribe I had ever seen on the continent during my route.
As Mr. Harriett was very anxious to cultivate the ac-
quaintance and friendship of such questionable
characters, he accepted of their invitation to "camp" with
them until the following morning, which was exceedingly
acceptable to me, as it enabled me to make several
sketches, and to hear something about them. After our
smoke several of the young Braves engaged in a horse
race, to which sport they are very partial, and at which
they bet heavily; they generally ride on those occasions

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[525]
[492]

541 stark naked, without a saddle, and with only a lasso
● 525 fastened to the lower jaw of the horse as represented
[492] in Sketch No. 16. ^A I had some difficulty at first in
[226] getting their chiefs to let me take their likenesses, but
after they comprehended what I wanted, they made no
objections.

648 Big Snake's brother was the first who sat to me, and
721 while I was sketching, he told me the following anecdote
[224] of his brother, of whom he seemed to be very proud.
Mr. Harriett understood the language and acted as
interpreter. Some time back, Big Snake had the free
admission to one of the American forts near the Rocky
Mountains. Coming up one day with two other In-
dians, to enter the gate, it was shut rudely in his face
by the orders of the commander, who had only lately
arrived in the country. This his pride led him to regard
as a direct insult; he rode away, and falling in with some
cattle that he knew belonged to the fort, he commenced
firing on them, and killed thirteen. As soon as the
sentinel, who had given offence, heard the shots, he sus-
pected the reason, and informed the superintendent, who
immediately collected his men, and sallied out with them
well armed, in the direction of the firing. Big Snake
being on the watch, hid himself with his two companions
behind a small hill.

The party from the fort apprehending there might
be a large number of Indians hid, hesitated to advance
within gun-shot; but a negro of the party offered to
proceed and reconnoitre. Approaching the hill with great
caution, and seeing no one, he began to think they had
escaped; but, when within about twenty yards of the
top, Big Snake sprang up from his lair and fired, bring-
ing him down, and the next moment bore off his scalp,
and waved it in derision towards the Americans.

Sotámatoxkuikaxtsiau. Mis-
tsists itástoxtómiau. A'itaxsapi-
tsinimiau. A'itsokápskotúnnimi-
áuaists. Kámix'táists áxsoka-
póxtsi itáxtómiau. Nitáíáx-
tsim, ksískstáiks oxpékioáunists
ánnistsiaie áuaikétsistatunímiau.
Itáipotoxtomiauaists. Itáuáiki-
napímiauaists. Mikapiksuyúiks
ánniksi áisautoyiau. Ánní nitái-
sikaxksinitsiau. Ánnikisiaie nox-
tátsimistaiau. Ánniyaie ná'xka-
nistatsiauxkaiau. Omístsi ómona-
tsóaiu, ánnistsiaie nitáumatapi-
tsináikaxtsiau. Omístsin otáps-
kanoáuaists osókásimoiáuaists.
Makokímiaists, Matsóuáiks mát-
apskatsiau. Ánnistsimaie áinasi-
natómiau. Á'iksistápiáikoxtosau-
áists, itáumatapimotseiau. Á'iso-
kaniau: Á'kipsimiop. Ki ánniksi
áisokaniau: Kátaimi? Túkskama
sáínnisi, mátakoxkuyúuatsiks, pax-
tsisaisksiniáie, máxksimis. Á'kit-
aumatapitsiuuikaxtsiau, omíksim
otékáuaiau itáupiau. Omístsim
otápskanoáuaists áupátsimiau. Ké-
kiau, ánniksimáie ákauanistsiau:

the way, the women played. The
men had a wonderful game. They
had ten [sticks] for pointers. The
[stick] of [the players on] one
[side] was long, it was a hider
[to be hidden in the hand]. And
the [stick] of those on the other
side was short. Those were the
[sticks], they hid. A good player
won the game. There were some
that dreamed about the stick-
game. They [those that had such
dreams] were called the „wonder-
ful hidere”.

Then they had another game.
They put sticks on each end.
They knocked [the ground] smooth.
Then they threw loose earth [over
that ground] in good shape [so
that it was level]. They put buf-
falo-chips on the back-side [of
the sticks]. I heard, [that] they
split beaver-teeth in two [to make
the circle of the gambling-wheel].
They put them [those teeth] toge-
ther. Then they wrapped them
together. They took [the bark]
off from the red willows. That
way [Blood said this, while he
was showing to me, how] they
cut [the willow-bark] in different
pieces. With those they made the
counters. That is the way, they
made the gambling-wheel. With
arrow-shooting they started the
wheel-game. They [the players]
put their clothes on a bet. They
were clothes of old lodges. They
put their leggings also on a bet.
On those they used counters.
[When] they had done putting
them about [when they had done

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529 Apáukit túkskaie. Ki omá túks-
524 kam ákoχkatsikèkiu. Otákai ákit-
525 anistsiu: Napí, náχkopáukit ná-
tókai. Amótsotsisau, áitskaátsiuaie.
Náχkipitákápsk. Maiáii pəχkiu-
aie. Omá maniká'pi matápska-
tòmaie óχpsists, otsítànists kéto-
kiokátsisaists, o'ós otsímmoiètan,
osáutataikáketan, énnistsiaie úp-
skatòm. Omák ákauχták énniaie
nitauápskau, nitáikəχtsiu.

putting a value on each article], then they began to roll the wheel and shoot against one another. They would say: We will [stop and] have a drink for a moment. And others would say: Is it deep? [that means: if you do not shoot, it is a go!] If it was not deep on the other side, [one] would have none, if he happened to forget, that it should be deep [that means: if the other one did not shoot, his partner would have no points, if he happened to forget to shoot]. [When] they would begin to play the wheel-game, their partners were sitting over there. They sat for the things that they put a bet on [to keep counters]. When they gained a point, they [the others] would say to them: Give me one point. And the other one would also gain a point. He would say to his partner: Partner, give me two points. When they beat one another, [the one that lost] was made to walk the prairie [that means: he had to put a bet on things, he had not with him, but in his lodge]. [Then he would say:] Let me begin to make my bets. His robe was a cow-skin. A young man would also put on a bet his arrows, his saddles — they were [so-called] prairie-chicken-traps —, the belly-part of his robe — his saddle-blanket —, his outside-top-saddle-blanket; those were the things he put on a bet. That was the way, the people of long

Kipitákeks ánmikamáiiu. Makokimisokasimáuaists. Einíua asipists, ánnistsiaie i'x'tau'xkánimiau. O'xkíni oksiks. Iksímakápsii n'x'koákasistotó'x'siks. Annái k'x'kanáikomistotó'x'siu. A'ukokimistsiu. Míkátokí maíáiks. Mokúini-
aiks. O'xkotokí ó'xkiks. Ánnistsiaie n'x'kitápaunyápsiu. O'xkíni ótstaxtsists. Mistsisi ó'xkotokí omá'xtáitá'x'piks. O'xpsists ó'xkotokí, oksisakopáists. Otoáistsi apáuki. Mátsitsipa ponoká'mitaiks. Imitáiks ánnistsiuais okó-
aists. Ánnimaie n'x'kitá'x'tom. Stáikits ámo oná'x'ksekani mátsi-
taíksimmatan. Kennísti áistax-
tóm. Nepúsi nitápaunatútsiu. Á'naxkaie ásk'xáipiskiu. Nox-
tástokoxkóyiu. Á'kstuyis, ákai-
sauoxsoxkim, piksiks otsitsípo-
kspi. O'maxksikimists otakó'x'si
mamíniks itáumatapsekótóyiu. Osá'x'kinaxkáuists ki oto'xko-
mistátsists ánniaie nitáá'x'koápa-
tsiau níneiks. Aistúyis, itáiksi-
sapistutsiu. Á'moists kanáipis-
kaists, mistákskuists, ánnistskaie
máto'xkokyápokonayíua. Kapseks
áiniá'x'katsiuaisiks. Kiniks mátai-
niá'x'katsiuaisiks. Ánnísti nitái-
nix'katá'x'pi pazsists. Ki amóksi
máiks nitá'x'kanistá'x'kanitá'x'-
tsiau. Istuyisi níneiks ámikamás-
tsámmókiau. Kénanyáie nanísts-
ksinoau, nanistá'x'tsimatáu. Má-
sokapsksinoau.

ago used to bet, [and] used to play. 539
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[Some of the following particu-
lars refer, of course, to a more
remote period than that, of which
Blood has given a picture in the
foregoing pages.] The robes of
the old women were made of
strips [sewed together]. Their
dresses were made of old lodges.
They used to sew them with the
sinews of the buffalo. Bones were
their awls. Very few [of the
ancient Peigans] had antelope-
dresses. All the other people were
old lodges for clothing. From an
old lodge they made their leg-
gings. Their robes were made
from the hides of young buffalo
[literally: were young buffalo].
They were buffalo killed in the
fall of the year. Stones were
their pots. From those they got
their food. Bones were their scrap-
ers. Sticks [and] stones were
things, they [also] scraped with.
Their arrow-points were stones,
they were flints. Their knives
were flint. There were no horses.
They packed their lodges on dogs.
There [on the dogs] they would
put them. Some of the people
put their beddings also on [dogs].
And they packed the other things
themselves [on their own backs].
In summer-time they moved
about. Those were the people,
[that] were always corralling.
From that they got plenty to
eat. When it would soon be
winter, they were already near
[the places], where the fowl

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291[203]
[412]

[224]

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[415]
[412]

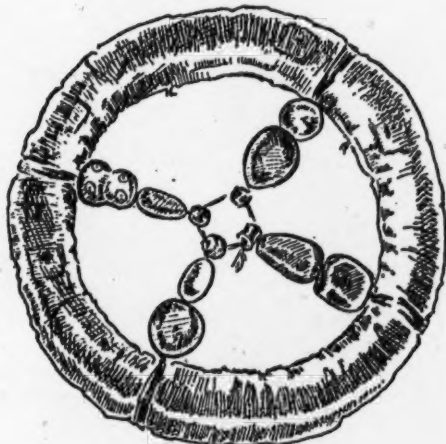
[231]

[442]

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By suppertime the wind had stopped blowing entirely, and the air was still and suddenly very warm. Nobody had much to say, so we all gravitated to the sack at 10:00. 122



Medicine Wheel

Thursday, September 13

I suppose we all have times when we feel like retreating to some murky corner, assuming the fetal position, and waiting hopefully for a better *mañana*. I still do not have the stories I want, and I was not comforted to learn that there is a linguist living in a nice comfortable motel in Browning and paying his informants by the hour and getting all kinds of information. Perhaps I should apply for a linguistic grant, but I prefer to be my own man. Things may not be going too great at the moment, but I still would rather be a skinny stallion than a fat gelding. 122

This morning was very warm, with no wind at all, and I was up and had the stove going and breakfast ready when Jim and the Chief got up at 6:30. Everybody was uncommunicative at breakfast, and as soon as they had eaten, Jim and the Chief took the truck and went to town. I took a long walk along the creek as far as Paul Many Hides' house. Nobody at home there, so I walked back along the creek bottom, examining the colorful stones and pebbles. I finally

122 is going fast, but I do want to see the Beaver Ceremony—and I
123 know that it will mean a lot to the old Chief, too.
796

123 The Chief said, "*Sokáhpí*," and he presented me with a very old
● 525 little wheel made of buckskin-covered wood. The wheel has four
431 spokes, made of large old Indian beads strung on sinew, and the
buckskin is painted with small Indian designs. The wheel was given
to the Chief by his father, and Jimmy had trouble translating the
name for the wheel because the term is no longer used. The closest
Jim could come to the actual translation of the term was "wheel
for rolling."

525 The wheel was employed by the Blackfoots in a type of gambling
game, and I taped the Chief's explanation of how the game was
played. The wheel would be rolled along the ground toward a log,
and the contestants would attempt to toss arrows through the spokes
of the wheel. The objective was to toss the arrow through the spokes
as close to the log as possible, the winner being determined
by the position of the arrow in relation to certain beads. Each bead
—the beads were of various colors—represented a horse that the
owner of the wheel had stolen from the enemy, and the game was
really very ritualistic and complicated.

122 We all stayed up until 12:30, and everyone was very happy and
conversational. The Chief has been quite aware that nobody has
been very joyful around here lately, and he said that this sudden
metamorphosis to conviviality has resulted from our decision to
have a Beaver Ceremony. The Chief also confided that I have made
quite a hit with Mary Ground, the lady who sponsored the Pipe
Dance. She was quite pleased that I enjoyed the berry soup so
much. She, incidentally, had prepared it.

(123) I gave the Chief the red flannel shirt that I had bought for him.

with vermilion earth paint. Jimmy admonished me to make certain that when I arose again I should turn to the right and not to the left. I still don't know why, but after I had knelt and the Chief had painted my forehead and nose and cheeks and the part of my hair and had chanted a prayer for me, I was careful to do as Jimmy had directed. 123
796
(302)

Anyone who thinks that Blackfoot Indians stand around with their arms folded under their blankets, feeling sorry for themselves or otherwise wasting time, could not be more mistaken. Despite lack of educational and employment opportunity—despite lack of money and everything that lack of money implies—the Blackfoot of today holds to the perdurable courage and zest for living which is his heritage. 181

"Idleness is the devil's workshop," my grandmother used to say, and the devil would find very little working room among the Blackfoots. There is always something cooking on the Reservation. Last night there was a dance in town, this morning there was the Beaver Dance, and this afternoon, as soon as the ceremony was completed, everybody went barrelling across the prairie to the Starr School racetrack. 517

The racetrack is only about a mile behind Jim White Grass house, and the Chief and Jim and I got there in time for the first race. I parked the station wagon between two other cars, and as I got out, an intoxicated younger-generation Indian stuck his hand out of a car window (why is it that all drunks want to shake hands!) and asked me who I was. I shook hands and spoke to him in Blackfoot and left him staring in the wide-eyed, drop-jawed posture of disbelief that only a drunk can portray. He was very young, and the only drunk I saw at the races. 122
541
(273)

Almost the next person I met was Stanley White Man, leading his palomino racehorse. I said, "Are you going to race the palomino, Stanley?"

Stanley said, "Yah, she's going ride her for me." Which, as anyone knows, meant that Stanley was going to enter the horse and that he had hired a jockey (male) to ride her for him. Stanley's horse lost.

The races were all match races, run over a straight, quarter-mile course. The finishline was flanked for many yards with cars and trucks, and the bet-takers were busily conducting business on the hood of an automobile. I was really quite pleased that I had represented the event so accurately in "Horserace." 541
525●

The Chief was laying down bets along with the best of them. In 525

- 525 dians love to wager, and Jimmy says that they even bet on whether someone will snare a whitefish on the next attempt, sometimes betting a dollar a loop. The Chief, by the way, is an excellent judge of horseflesh, and he won a few bucks today.

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525 Last time, down at Heart Butte, I did not take any pictures of the races, but today I came well prepared and shot a full roll of 35mm and two reels of 8mm movie film. A "Stick Game," one of which invariably takes place along with the horseraces, was in progress a short distance from the track, and since the stick game had constituted an important symbolic element of "Horserace," I took some movie shots of this one. The stick game is an Indian gambling game in which two lines of people—each side representing a team—sit facing each other. To the accompaniment of a very rapid drumming, and a constant, unisonous chanting by all the players, two sets of small bones, one in each set marked with a black stripe, are shuffled and concealed in the hands of two of the participants. The object is for the opposing team to guess in which hands the unmarked bones are concealed, the guess being made not vocally but by intricate gestures of the fingers and thumbs of both hands. Score is kept by the passing back and forth of small sticks, the first side to have ten sticks being the winner. The stick game is, like all Indian games, a very graceful and rhythmic thing. Jimmy immediately joined the game, but the best player was Ray Many Hides, one of Phillip Many Hides' sons. Ray is a fine young chap, and one of my favorites among the younger Indians.

123
126 As I raised the camera from the game to get a shot of the on-lookers, a lovely teen-age Indian girl hastily shook out her long hair and touched it with an infinitely feminine gesture in preparation for having her picture taken. This kind of grabbed at me because I recognized the girl as one of the older kids that had been at the Beaver Ceremony. I had felt strangely drawn to this lovely little creature with the sensitive face and the shy demeanor. I had fallen immediately in love with her large, moist, doe-like eyes, and I had wondered that she did not enter into things but rather spent the entire time in the kitchen, her jean-clad legs dangling from the high table upon which she sat. And then finally she got up to leave, and [732] I could tell then that her blue jeans masked a badly crippled leg.

When the films are developed, I am sure that I will have a fine photographic record of both the horseraces and the stick game, but there is no escape from the suspicion that by taking pictures I have somehow cheated myself. Somehow the presence of the cameras places me outside of things, and although I will always be able to

ble Piegan horse-stealer, White Quiver, single-handedly stole some horses from the Crows and successfully took at least one of them all the way to Canada. 721

But the Chief's last war party was the last one to involve the spilling of blood in intertribal Plains Indian warfare, and the scalp dance held in the Lone Fights camp of the Bloods during the summer of 1889 was the last scalp dance ever held by any of the Plains Indian Tribes. The scalps that were the central item of the celebration were, of course, the scalps that had been taken by Young Pine and the Chief. And since the Chief allowed Young Pine to take his scalp first, the last scalp ever taken by a member of the Blackfoot Nation was taken by my Indian dad, Head Chief to this very day of the South Piegans. 721
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After the stories had been told, we all enjoyed a hot bourbon drink while I taped the Chief's explanation of the Feather Game. 525
[26] The Feather Game is quite similar to the Stick Game (or Hand Game), and as is the case with all Indian gambling games, the Feather Game is very ritualistic and has strong religious overtones. Indian gambling games are conducted on the honor system and it would not be difficult for anyone to cheat if he really wanted to. But you never need worry about an Indian's cheating at one of these contests; such an act, he believes, would bring him much ill-fortune. Joe Morning Gun is the owner of a "Feather Bundle," and since I have now been accepted as a full-fledged Blackfoot, I have been invited to attend the Feather Game which will be played at Joe's house next Saturday night. [123]

All the moose meat, with exception of a small amount which the Chief has allowed me to set aside for immediate use, is now on the drying racks, and this was one of the warmest and most congenial evenings I have ever experienced. It was twelve o'clock before the Chief finally said, "*Kén-yai-au-wah-nay-náh-pi-quon*" [That's what the old White man says], and tumbled into the weary sack. Jimmy has retired, too, and now I shall do likewise. 122
[251]

782 In this quotation generosity applies to both man and god.
175 As in the transfer of religious fetishes and the creation of
the various religious bundles, the individual's relation to
the supernatural is conditioned by and related to the distri-
555 bution of goods. In the domains of secular achievement and
religious recognition those persons well enough off to re-
ward or support others generously were recognized, are "good"
or ideal, and are given the social approbation desired by
all men.

● 525 Turning to other activities, the use of leisure was
175 not particularly a problem among the Blood. From the time
of Thompson,

. . . for like all people who have too much time
on their hands, they are almost to a man, more or
less, given to gambling day and night.⁵⁹

to the days of Schultz, gambling on almost anything occupied
this time. Schultz tells of two major incidents in his book,
My Life as an Indian, which stem from conflict inspired by
gambling losses. One case, "The Great Race" tragedy is

578 averted by the cooler heads of the older men. The other case,
687 "A Game of Fate," did not turn out so benignly.

762 Schultz introduces the episode as an unusual event.

525 There was an unusual craze for gambling that winter.
175 By day, the men, when not hunting, played the wheel
and arrow game. . . . At night the camp resounded with
the solemn, wierd, gambling chant from many lodges.
Even the women gambled, and many were the altercations
over their bets.⁶⁰

578 The story concerns a young man engaged by this com-
687 pulsion to gamble but faced with a disastrous losing streak.
762
525 Schultz remonstrates with him.
175

"Just think how much you are risking; what a shame it would be were you to be set afoot, no horses with which to move camp, not even one for your woman to ride.⁶¹

[554] Gambling losses are reckoned along with shame and other
[157] status determinants, and therefore, it is apparent that the unusual gambling bent is somehow related to increased status competition.

At any rate, the young man would not stop. "I must play again with him, and I'm sure I will win. I shall pray. I shall make a sacrifice. I must win." And, "I can't stop until I have won back all that I have lost."⁶² The young man stayed in the game, trying to recoup lost goods and lost prestige.

He was reduced to destitution, whereupon his competitor suggested the following:

. . . I will bet everything I have won from you against your woman." The loser accepted this final challenge and, "Begin!" he cried to his adversary. "We will play. We will play for her," and he added under his breath, "for her and for another thing." Again the young man lost, and his adversary demanded immediate possession of his winnings. The young man acquiesced and the following scene transpired.

"There she is!" the Fisher (loser) exclaimed, pointing to the couch where the woman lay completely covered with a buffalo robe. "There she is," he continued, "but you shall never touch her. I am going to kill you, to make a sacrifice of you here in her presence."⁶³

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The terrified winner begged for his life but the enraged Fisher killed him with his knife. Then the loser turned to his woman and lifted the buffalo robe cover. She too, was dead. Covering herself with her robe, she had grasped a knife in both her hands and pressed it down into her heart. . . . "It is my fault," he said, "my fault, my fault! But you shall not go alone. I am with you yet." And before any of us could interfere, he plunged the knife he still held into his own bosom, and fell over beside her, life-blood streaming from his mouth.⁶⁴

[57] The motivations and causal factors involved in this murder-double suicide are complex; however, it is apparent that the gamblers were competing for more than diversion and that such competition could not help but lead to open and overt conflict. The drive to compete, to win, to avoid shame is all part of the tragic episode. Among the young Blood of nearly a century ago, as today, lives were not segmented into work and leisure. Success strivings continued on into the night via the hand game.

[181]

Summary

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To conclude this section on the young Blood of the past there are a number of points worth reviewing. In the search for past behaviors that relate to today, a major facet of Blood life came to light: the Blood community. Thompson noted the relevance of this unit in his description of alliances and emotions. Also, one can infer the effect of the Blood-Blackfoot community from the episodes of the war party, the bear story, and from the statement on

181 "Handsome-man" of the Blood indicate a continuation of these
178 attitudes from the beginning of the nineteenth century through
175 to the latter part of the century.^A Indeed, the most im-
portant bit of evidence in this regard is the story of the
murder-suicide as a result of competition in the hand game.^B

175 Also, as indicated by this episode, gambling had been a
157 Blood-Blackfoot trait for a considerable period of time.
[525] This lends more support to the idea of continuity, and to
[178] the proposition that sporting competition was an early and
[526] continuing feature of the daily lives of the Indians of
the northern plains. This contention derives much support
from ethnographic evidence, in that almost all adult games
[525] recorded were competitive rather than diversionary.¹ Thus
the gambling incident was not unusual, despite Schultz'
contention to the contrary, and the kind of gambling that
leaves a man destitute and ashamed indicates a strong bent
toward competition.

181 This kind of competition would seem to conflict
178 with the contemporary value of avoiding direct and disruptive
461 competition as illustrated in the disvalue of the activity
Boxing. However, it is asserted that this is merely one of
the contradictory demands placed upon the individual by many
cultures. This contradiction can be seen in the past in the
demands of the community in warfare and horse stealing and
the needs of the individual. It can be seen in the present

A, [See Category 175, pp. 168-170--Analyst]

B, [See Category 525, pp. 172-174--Analyst]